

Buddy Line



Newsletter of Fraternal Order of Underwater Swim School, Key West, Florida

May 2003

President's Corner by Don Stone

California, Here We Come! Reunion 2004 is less than a year away! Make plans now to spend the 7th, 8th, and 9th of May 2004 in Coronado, California at the fourth biannual UWSS Reunion. We are getting the details ironed out to make this reunion a truly memorable occasion.

Bernie Campoli and Peter Dirx put me in touch with Greta Lopez at MWR Coronado and she sent us a brochure that covered MWR facilities, menus, cost, and regulations. We have sent a deposit to reserve the Amphibian Room at Club Coronado for our reunion.

They seem to be very well organized and will even take care of getting all of our members on base for the functions, including those who do not have current government ID's. We will have to submit a list in advance of names and pertinent data for base access.

We are starting to work on visits to active duty installations. Consolidated Divers, the new home of our UWSS Shark is a good bet. A visit to an EOD detachment, either shore based or on board a ship, is another. Chris Seger is working on this one, and he could use some help from members with contacts there.

Pre and post reunion activities are very possible, with two golf courses, a marina with boat rentals, an RV campground, and reduced price tickets for fishing trips, tours to Mexico and many other activities. For many of us California is a major trip, but considering the large number of attractions in the San Diego area, both on and off base, a great vacation can be planned around the reunion.



More from Mackenzie's Diary

Robert B. MacKenzie, a 1957 UWSS graduate retired after 30 years service in the Marine Corps, shared the diary he kept of his days as a UWSS student, when he and several other Marines were sent from Camp Pendleton to Key West to go through the scuba class. Here are more excerpts from his diary.

13May: School days started with an 0630 reveille and chow. All is disorganized now - cleaning stations and class organization will have to wait until after the 0730 muster.

Muster in the equipment room preceded the introductory class by Mr. Dolan, the Executive Officer of the school. Then we headed for the track and one hour of calihoopies - mile run, squats, jumping jacks, pushups, and side dips. Into the pool after a rushed shower with fins and face masks, the pool being half salt and half chlorine - abominable tasting stuff which certainly produces the desired effect of keeping the mouth shut as much as possible.

We were first monitored as to kicking form and then were paired off for laps around the pool. McGoo and I beat the crowd easily. The preliminary training we did seems to have paid off.

After the first pool session, we laid down around the edge for "Hello Darlin's" and vertical kicking exercises. Fifty "Darlin's" nearly killed me; fifty more and I'm certain I was considerably more than half into the grave. Then into the pool for some more laps.

After a heavy lunch, the classes started - diving medicine, physiology, equipment and its use. Dr. Kirker's classroom manner put me to sleep periodically before Tex Hager woke me up.

Cleaning stations have been assigned, and I drew a winner: the training and instruction rooms. A half hour per night every night might keep them clean.

Movie at night: how to swim the breaststroke, backstroke and crawl. Thanks for the instruction.

Continued on page 3

UWSS LOGO ITEMS



The following logo items are still available, so send in your orders and they will be shipped pronto. Prices include shipping. Availability subject to change. We can obtain other items, such as sweat shirts, if there are enough requests.

- White Beefy-T shirts..... 13.00 ea, 2 for 23.00
Logo front and back (pocket or no pocket – your choice)
Sizes L, XL, XXL, Childs 10/12 (no pocket)
- Ash gray Beefy-T shirts..... 14.00 ea, 2 for 25.00
Large logo on back, small logo on pocket
Sizes M, L, XL, XXL, Childs 10/12 (no pocket)
- White Polo shirt 18.00 ea, 2 for 33.00
Small logo on pocket, 50/50 cotton/poly
Sizes M, L, XL, XXL
- Ash Polo shirt 19.00 ea, 2 for 35.00
Small logo on pocket, 50/50 cotton/poly
Sizes M, L, XL, XXL
- Coffee mugs with logo..... 11.00 ea
7.00 if ordered with shirt
- UWSS logo decal 2.00 ea

Send payment with order to Don Stone,
1440 SW 5th Ave
Boca Raton, FL 33432

IN MEMORIUM: FRANK HALE, DIVER

Frank Hale passed over the bar since the last Buddy Line. Frank was one of the eight commissioning instructors assigned to UWSS. Although he came to UWSS from UDT2, Frank was also a First Class Diver and an outstanding instructor at UWSS. Frank left UWSS in 1957 for the EOD Navy. He retired as MNC and for many years was a commercial mixed gas diving supervisor.

Secretary/Treasurer’s Report

Membership

98 regular members
72 associate members

Account Balance February 2003	2,883.96
Interest	+ 3.62
Dues	+ 25.00
Logo items sold	+ 121.00
Buddy Line expense	- 89.50
Reunion Deposit	- 175.00
Account Balance May 2003	2769-.08

FO/UWSS Mission

The Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School was formed in order to keep lines of communication open between personnel of the armed forces who were staff or students at the Navy Underwater Swimmers School Key West, Florida. Associate membership is open to family, friends, and associates of UWSS students and staff who share an interest in the goals and activities of the FO/UWSS. Associate members will not have voting privileges.

One of the most important reasons for our existence as an organized group is to plan for and participate in biannual reunions, which will be held at various locations to be selected by members’ votes.

FO/UWSS Officers

- President Don Stone
- Vice President..... Chris Seger
- Secretary/Treasurer A. Dee Clark
- Historian Erasmo Riojas

The Buddy Line newsletter is published quarterly in February, May, August and November. Buddy Line editors are Don and Art Stone. e-mail: stonefish7@cs.com or uwssbuddyline@cs.com snail mail: 1440 S.W. 5th Ave., Boca Raton, FL 33432 phone: (561) 391-6727 fax: (509) 472-6492

Historical Information Requested

Specific information is needed on schedules, training events, testing, content of classes, etc. at UWSS for inclusion in a history of Navy Diving being written by Tom Hawkins for the Office of Naval Research. Please contact Doc Rio, UWSS Historian, by phone at (281) 485-0177 or e-mail at elticitl@mi-vida-loca.com.

Mackenzie's Diary – continued from page 1

Was going to the base movie after the first one - required attendance - but decided that I could not take more of the same tomorrow unless I got some sleep tonight.

14May: Run! Re-con! Pushups! Pull-ups! Run! Run! The chanting started on the run this morning and nearly led to our downfall, as we were all put down in quick fashion by the "Darlin's" after swimming around the pool for an hour after calihoopies.

McGoo and I swam together again and defeated all comers. Dropped fins in the deep end and had to retrieve our own amidst the seemingly thousands in the immediate area. Mine, being size 14 1/2 were easy to find. McGoo's disappeared.

Diving medicine lectures all afternoon. I got caught nodding and had to stand up in the rear of the classroom. Large guffaws after class, since I was the only one caught.

Four of us volunteered to play softball for the school at night against Fleet Sonar School over at the Seaplane Base. The final score really shouldn't be mentioned, but for the record, it was 20 - 3. Our favor? Not on your life. Even the outstanding hitting of our class proctor, Frank Kappesser, couldn't save us. Home late.

15May: The exercises of the last two days caught up with all of us. The run was all right, but from there on any resemblance to "in shape" Marines was purely mythical in nature. It was horrible!

A 300-yard swim determined our swim buddies. Al Brown beat the field, on his back using fins only, with a time of 4:52; Bostain was second with a 5:02; MacKenzie with 5:10 and Anderson with a 5:18.

Al and I paired off by request; Lt. Anderson and Bostain paired off by time.

"Darlin's" again! This time even the greatest effort on my part could not produce the slightest fluctuation of the leg muscles. They just wouldn't work for any appreciable length of time. I banged my hand, broke my watch - nothing went right.

Back into the pool for more swimming - "Raise both arms out of the water up to the elbows." "Take off your face mask and hold it in the air." "Take off your web belt and knife and hold them in the air." "Take off your life jacket and hold it up in the air." "Take off your fins and hold them up." "Now, put them all back on again." Cries of anguish heard from all as they attempted the re-uniforming - all while continuing to swim.

Then - learning to surface dive for weights - correctly; learning the proper method of clearing the face mask of water. Have I mentioned at great length and in glowing terms of the taste of our good water? I do so again.

This afternoon we trotted to the pier, had compression chamber tests for those not being so qualified during the

past three months (Brown, Quinton and I had ours on USS Sperry on 15April), had a long wait on the hot barge, and then loaded the boats for the first 500-yard swim in the ocean. This one didn't count toward our final grade.

Al and I came into the beach second, after having taken a half-moon approach to the finish line. We'd expected current where there really was none - 9 1/2 minutes for us and beat by 30 seconds.

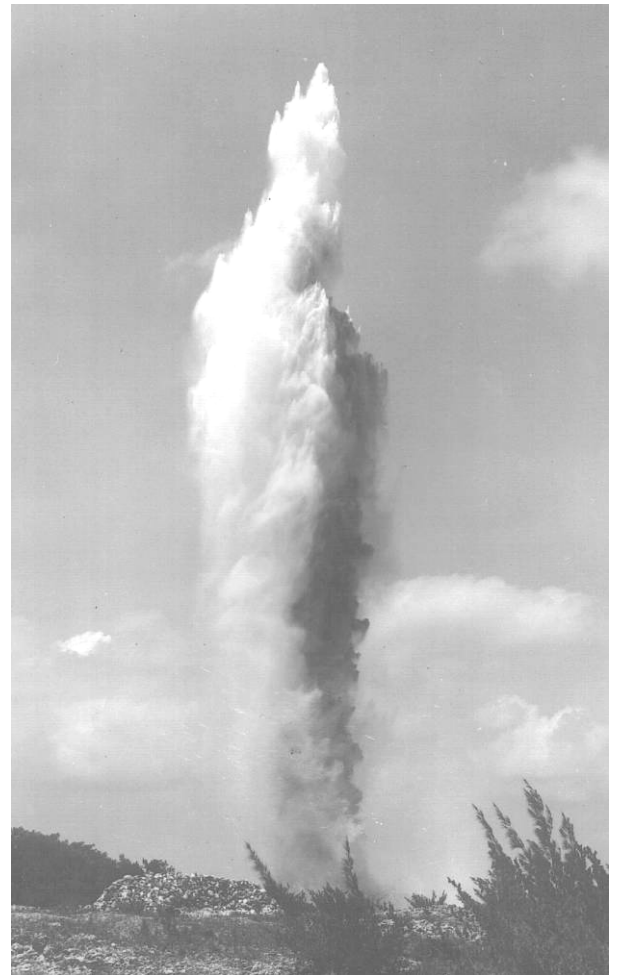
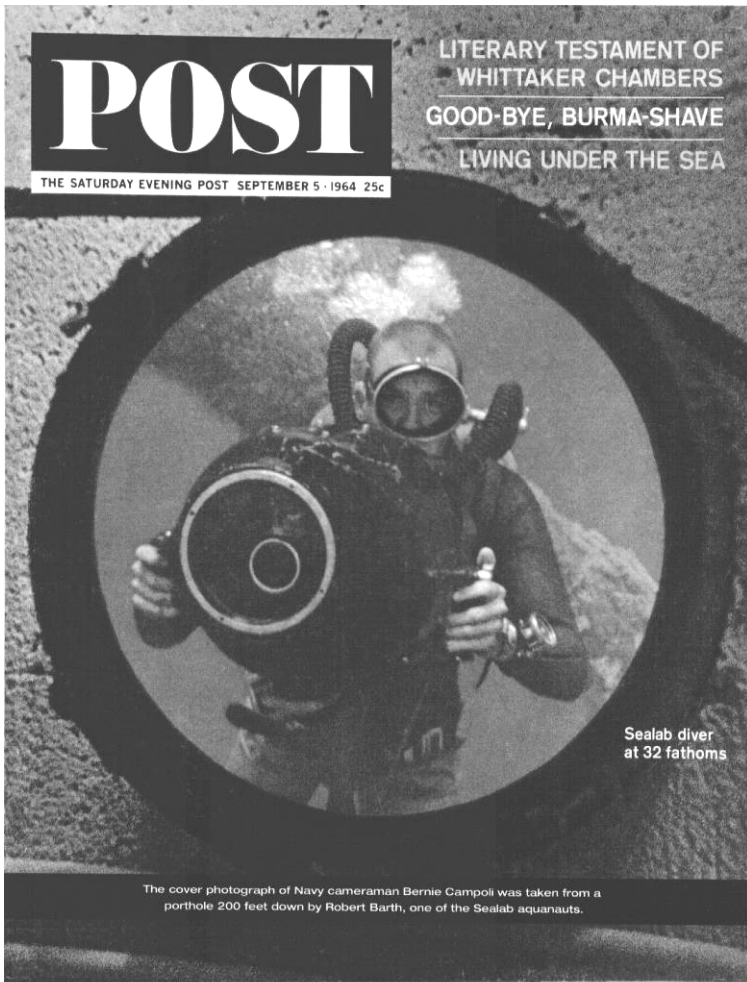
Skin diving among the coral and the vary-colored fish. First normal surface dives, then swims under water under the LCPR, then free diving until the time to return. Unloaded the boats, marched back to the House, washed off our gear in fresh water, cleaned up on our stations, showered and ate - a full one hour indeed.

"Hell Raiders of the Deep" started at 1900 - another required film presentation of the school: 90 minutes about the Italian frogmen during WWII. Terrific for our purposes, though I thought for sure some of the wives present would make their husbands drop out of the school before they even got started.

I am now standing my watch as duty student - Section 3 and its Marine compliment has the duty tonight. With studying, an unfinished book, and letters to write, I'll have no trouble at all in passing my three hours.



Chris Seger looking for Cinderella



Bernie Campoli and Bob Barth on location with Sealab

Demo Island -1955 – sent by Roger Lynch



Class picture (class #29?) sent by Jim Doan. Identified are: Back row – Charles J. Janak and James A. Franklin. Middle row – A. Patton Hammond, Len Sucsy, Dave Langbehn, Richard Burress, Richard Davidson, Dean Ab-Hugh, Carl Schulze, Instructor. Front row – James E. Doan, Charles Alderman, Ray B. Burton Jr, Fred Rotzler, John B. Culver, David Turiff.



Scuttlebutt Corner

Merlin Simonson sent his UWSS class picture from 1966; Erasmo Rojas was his class proctor. He still works for the government, but what difference – a quote from his email sent January 2003:

Even though I was a Navy EOD Officer on active duty from 1966 to 1969, I am currently an Army civilian employee administering a contract which supports our US Forces in the Balkans. I work in Heidelberg, Germany and make trips to Kosovo and Bosnia. It is quite impressive to see our soldiers on duty in places like Camp Bondsteel or Eagle Base.

In technical terms, I am liaison officer between US Army Europe and US Army Corps of Engineers Transatlantic Programs Center located in Winchester, VA.

It is interesting to see the change in the UWSS sign and the dive gear in the various class pictures.



April 1958 Class Picture sent by Clarence Provaznik (back row, 4th from right).

Who can name the three different SCUBA regulators in this picture?

Membership Application

Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School

Full Name: _____

Wife's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

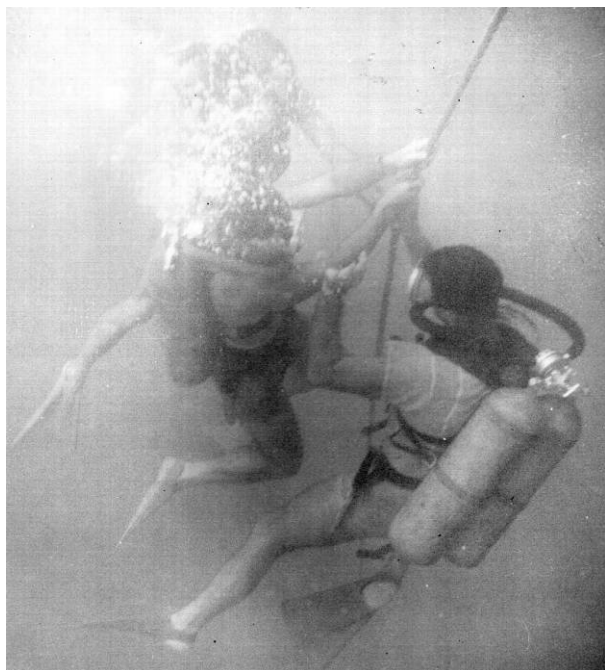
Mailing Address: _____

Branch of Service: _____ Dates of Service: _____

Dates & Class # at UWSS: _____ or Associate Membership: _____

Send copy of class picture if you have one. 2 Year Membership \$25.00

Make check to A. Dee Clark, Treasurer and mail to 1315 Garner St., Nacogdoches, TX. 75961



The Way It Was

100 Foot Qualification Dive – 1955

sent by Roger Lynch

The 100 foot qualifying dive was probably the major event in a diving trainees life at UWSS, and most looked forward to it with a mixture of anticipation and fear. It was almost like a practical final exam.

The two hose Aqualung regulator that we used in those days had many peculiarities, and a successful SCUBA diver had to understand how it worked and how to maintain it. The UDT swimmer's vest is what we wore for emergency flotation, there were no BC's. Our pressure gauge was the ease or difficulty we had in breathing in. When it became difficult, we pulled the mechanical reserve lever down and headed for home. If you ran completely out of air at depth, it was blow and go, or buddy breathe and swimming ascent – if he was around and had any left

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